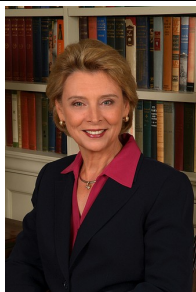


WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2010

VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6

Governor signs Executive Order on food policy



On June 22, Gov. Chris Gregoire signed an executive order directing state agencies to work with several groups to improve access to healthier foods for Washington residents. The governor says the order will help identify gaps in the state's food system that prevents nutritious food from reaching all residents. Gregoire signed the order, entitled "Strengthening Washington's Food Systems through Policy and Collaboration," at the Food Systems Strategies Summit on the UW campus.

The State Conservation Commission and the Office of Farmland Preservation will be convening the first discussions concerning farmland preservation. The Order calls for a report to the governor and the Legislature to be completed by December 31, 2011. This report will provide an assessment of existing food policies and programs as well as identify gaps and issues that need to be addressed.

To read the full Executive Order, go to: [Executive Order 10-02](#)

First cherries en route on new railcars

By The Associated Press

QUINCY -- A train with refrigerated railcars is carrying its first load of Washington cherries to Chicago this summer, thanks to a new central Washington rail facility built to provide faster delivery of perishable products to the Midwest.

Backers say the new rail service can cover 2,000 miles in less than four days, far faster and cheaper than standard truck service and reducing the carbon footprint of each container shipped by 50 percent.

State, federal and local dollars paid for the roughly \$6 million facility, which has the capacity to ship 200 containers per month. First shipments, largely apples, started in April, and the first containers of cherries were shipped last week.

Read more: [Tri City Herald - Cherries en route on new railcars](#)

Ecology Water Resource Leadership to Change

Washington Department of Ecology's Water Resource Manager, Ken Slattery, [is slated to retire in the coming months](#). Maia Bellon — an expert on water law and policy in Washington — has agreed to join Ecology's water management team now, and to begin serving as Water Resources Program manager when Ken retires. Maia has served as one of Ecology's lead water attorneys in the Ecology Division of the Attorney General's Office for nine years. She'll be making the move to Ecology later this month. Ecology is hoping Ken will be with them until the end of the legislative session.

Deadline for EQIP set for August 13

(June 21, 2010) – Agricultural producers have until August 13 to apply for financial and technical assistance through Washington's most popular conservation program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). EQIP is a voluntary, technical and financial assistance program designed to help farmers improve irrigation efficiency; manage nutrient run-off and/or animal waste; improve the health of native plant communities; and reduce soil loss.

The **August 13 signup deadline** is for Washington's general EQIP funding. Interested agricultural producers are encouraged to contact their local USDA service center office or check the agency's web site at www.wa.nrcs.usda.gov for more information.

Stay in contact and sign up for the OFP-News Listserv!

Send an e-mail addressed to jgiuntoli@scc.wa.gov with the subject title "add to Listserv"

Email frequency is around one a month

NABC Poultry Processing Equipment Rental Program



Northwest Agriculture Business Center has been working with local farmers to overcome processing obstacles that are faced when trying to expand farming operations. The issue of where and how to process product is usually an obstacle for new value-added enterprises. In order to meet growing demand for poultry processing and to help reach the market for fresh, local, poultry products in communities NABC has purchased Featherman processing equipment that is available for rent.

This equipment can be used in conjunction with the WSDA permits for on farm sales or for home consumption of poultry. It is available for a rental fee of **\$27.05** per day

to all farmers in the 5 counties we serve (**Island, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, & Whatcom**). Demand for the equipment is high so we recommend reserving equipment for your slaughter dates in advance.

For more information and details on how to reserve, please go to: <http://www.agbizcenter.org/node/38>

NASS Weather and Crop Update for May



June 14 - Cool and very wet weather continued throughout the State in May. High winds and cold temperatures early in the month gave way to lots of rain, resulting in the wettest spring in over 20 years. Winter wheat and spring grains were in excellent shape, but a strong rust presence was evident in the Palouse area and elsewhere. Spraying was hampered by continued rain, but many farmers felt their harvest yields would be higher even with rust damage. The first cutting of alfalfa was significantly damaged. What did not get rained on in the windrow, turned rank on the stump. Dry edible bean seeding, field corn, and seed potato planting were all delayed as well. Heavy rains caused cherries to split, reducing

harvest quality. Overall pollination by bees appeared to have been hurt by the weather. What fruit did get pollinated likely will be larger in size. Oyster demand was expected to climb with the unfortunate events in the Gulf.

Lind Combine Derby

The Lind Combine Demolition Derby held it's 22nd running on June 12th in Lind, WA. This one-of-a-kind event, offered nearly \$10,000 in prize money. The derby is put on by the Lind Lion's Club and attracts more than 5,000 fans during its one-day event. The farming equipment used in the derby is a unique part of the event. The combines must be 25 years or older. **To view the combines in action from 2006, go to: [2006 Combine Demolition Derby Feature \(YouTube\)](#). View a slideshow from the 2010 Derby here: [2010 Combine Derby Slideshow](#)**

Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program

The Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program is a new program that will invest \$45.1 million for 2010 in organizations that provide training, technical assistance or small loans to new and existing rural small businesses. RMAP's goal is to help new & existing rural micro-entrepreneurs by providing funds to micro-enterprise development organizations for micro-lending and technical assistance to their micro-loan prospects & borrowers. For more information, go to: [Rural Micro-entrepreneur Assistance Program](#) Proposals are due July 16, 2010.

Revised Water Right Handbook Released

[Trout Unlimited - Washington Water Project](#) (Formerly Washington Rivers Conservancy) recently released a revised handbook for irrigators in Washington State, titled ***Landowner's Guide to Washington Water Rights***. The revised handbook explains what it means to have water rights, options for changing and transferring water rights, details on avoiding relinquishment, and various options and opportunities that are available to help landowners voluntarily and collaboratively conserve and protect Washington's water resources.

You can find the revised handbook by going to: [Landowner's Guide to Washington Water Rights](#).

Passing On The Family Legacy



Beef Daily Blog - [Amanda Nolz](#) June 22nd, 2010

“Getting started is the first step; getting started is the hardest step,” says Heather Gessner, a South Dakota Extension Educator from McCook County. She made the statement during her presentation on estate planning and transitioning the farm and ranch to the next generation at a recent women’s agriculture day I attended in Brookings, SD. “Families discuss which sires to breed the cows to each year, which corn varieties to plant and what jobs need to be tackled on a daily basis, but nobody wants to sit down and talk about what happens after you pass away,” she says.

Estate planning is one of those things that is put off for a rainy day, and often times, is put off until it’s way too late. From Gessner’s presentation, I have compiled her top five tips for establishing a top-notch succession plan that will protect the family legacy for generations to come.

1. Make it a family business meeting. Don’t conduct the conversation over the holidays, and set the meeting at a neutral location, where family members can be treated as equals throughout the planning process.
2. Wills, trusts, business structure, charities and future plans are best discussed by creating a management team to help the process; this might include a lawyer, financial advisor, accountant, insurance agent and trust officer. This team will help achieve the objectives of those creating a succession plan.
3. Before meeting with the estate-planning team, ask yourself the following question: What do I really want to happen to the family farm? Set goals, both short-term and long-term, to make a concrete plan and, as Gessner puts it, “take the beast out of estate planning.”
4. Gessner said other emotional topics that must be tackled are decisions on the care of minor children or aging parents, deciding when to retire, who to involve in the operation, and writing down wishes for future medical procedures.
5. Finally, just get started. “You can have the best estate plan between you and your spouse, but if it’s not written down, it’s just a really great conversation about the farm. Although it’s incredibly difficult to sit down and tackle this emotional subject, it will lead to better communication and a smoother transition of your operation in the long run,” explains Gessner.

So, have you had the tough conversation with your family members? Do you have a working estate-plan in place? What were the toughest issues to sort out in your experience? What advice would you have for other producers regarding the process? And, additional information on transitioning the family farm, see the *BEEF* [estate planning page](#).

Farm Transition Network Annual Conference



The International Farm Transition Network will host their annual conference July 20-23, 2010 at the Sheraton Suites in Cuyahoga Falls, OH. This three day meeting will bring together agricultural professionals, farmers, citizens, and service providers to discuss and learn about exciting projects in farm transition.

The conference will highlight the Countryside Initiative: a partnership between the Cuyahoga Valley National Park and the Countryside Conservancy. The program offers rehabilitated farms in the national park to private farmers through a competitive long-term lease process. During the conference, participants will hear panel discussions on farm labor, beginning farmer and farm succession

research, and farm policy, and listen to interns, apprentices, and retiring farmers discuss their needs related to farm transition. Registration is open and the deadline for the discounted conference hotel rate is fast approaching.

For registration, agenda, and more information, please visit: <http://www.cvcountryside.org/farmland/>

Comments Invited on the Value-Added Producer Grant Program

National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition (NSAC) Blog Post

Family farm advocates have an important opportunity to help shape the Value-Added Producer Grant Program (VAPG). USDA has requested comments on the [administrative rules](#) that will govern the implementation of this program. VAPG offers competitive grants to farmers and ranchers developing new farm and food-related business enterprises that boost farm income, create jobs, and increase rural economic opportunity. VAPG offers both working capital and planning grants that strengthen the profitability and competitiveness of small and medium-sized farmers and ranchers.

The 2008 Farm Bill established ranking priorities for VAPG projects that benefit beginning, socially disadvantaged and small and moderate-sized family farmers and ranchers. Special reserve funds have been established for beginning farmers and projects involving mid-tier value chains.

Read more by going to: <http://sustainableagriculture.net/blog/vapg-action-now/>

High court weighs in on genetically modified crops

The Supreme Court has lifted a nationwide ban on the planting of genetically engineered alfalfa seeds, despite claims they might harm the environment.

In a 7-1 vote June 21, the court reversed a federal appeals court ruling that prohibited Monsanto Co. from selling alfalfa seeds that are resistant to the popular weed killer Roundup. Justice Stephen Breyer took no part in the case because his brother, Charles Breyer, is the judge who issued the injunction.

It was the first Supreme Court decision involving genetically modified crops. The Supreme Court case is *Monsanto v. Geertson Seed Farms*, No. 09-475.

To read the full opinion, go to: <http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/09pdf/09-475.pdf>

Funding To Assist Ag Producers and Co-ops In WA Announced

Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack announced June 3 during the National Summit of Rural America that USDA has selected recipients in 45 states and Puerto Rico to receive business development assistance and pursue marketing opportunities for agricultural commodities. Funding is made available through USDA Rural Development assistance under the Value-Added Producer Grant program, which was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. Washington state was awarded \$944,000 for seven projects.

One of the awarded groups is in Reardon, WA. Columbia Plateau Producers, LLC, which is owned by 21 wheat-producing families in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, has been selected to receive a working capital grant to expand the marketing capacity of the organization. All farmers in the cooperative are committed to no-till farming which saves fuel, prevents soil erosion and limits water runoff. The wheat produced is milled into high quality flour, marketed to bakeries, food manufacturers, and flour marketers in the Pacific Northwest under the "Shepherd's Grain" brand.

The full award list for Washington:

- Crown S Ranch, LLC; \$110,000
- Red Mountain Viticulture, LLC dba LaCoye Vineyards; \$120,000
- AHG Related Properties; \$300,000
- Whidbey Island Meat Processing Steering Committee; \$15,000
- Wilcox Farms Inc.; \$49,000
- Columbia Plateau Producers, LLC; \$300,000
- Stemilt Growers; \$50,000

Source: USDA Press Release



Antique Tractor Shows coming this summer



Two great opportunities to re-connect with some good ol' fashion tractor shows.

June 25 and 26th, come join the [Puget Sound Antique Tractor & Machinery Association](#) for their annual Summer Tractor Pull at [Berthusen Park](#) in Lynden, WA. Events begin at 11am.

On July 10th and 11th at the Grays Harbor Fairgrounds is the Antique Farm Engine and Tractor Show. This is an annual show of equipment used in farming from the 1880 models to the present day models. Not only will there be a bit of history to view, but also a tractor pulling contest, swap meet and many vendors.

Gates open at 8 am. Contact: Bill Lowers 360-866-2893 at Jim Borden 360-482-3284. For directions, go to: <http://www.ghcfairgrounds.com/index.asp>

The Northwest Washington EXPO VIII is to be held this year at [Berthusen Park Lynden](#), August 4 through 7, 2010. The featured tractor will be the John Deere model M, MT, MI and MC tractors with related implements and John Deere stationary engines. Parade each day and seminars on Thursday through Saturday. Pot-luck dinner on Thursday evening and John Deere tractor pull on Friday afternoon. Active John Deere equipment and implement displays each day. Bring the family out for some awesome John Deere pulling and showing. For more information, go to: [Puget Sound Antique Tractor & Machinery Association](#)



WSU Puyallup Organic Farm Field tour

July 26 – WSU Puyallup Organic Farm Field tour – WSU Puyallup Organic Farm. Six varieties of canola, camelina and mustard plots will be available for viewing during the annual Puyallup Organic Farm Field Tour. More information is available by contacting WSU Soil Scientist Craig Cogger at (253) 445-4512, cogger@wsu.edu.

Webinar: Draft Compliance Guide for Mobile Slaughter Units

Webinar: USDA-FSIS Draft Compliance Guide for Mobile Slaughter Units **July 13, 10:00am - 11:00am (Pacific Time)**

The USDA's FSIS issued a draft "Mobile Slaughter Unit Compliance Guide." for owners and managers of new/existing red meat or poultry MSU who want to operate under federal inspection. Comments due July 24.

Find the guide here: http://www.fsis.usda.gov/PDF/Compliance_Guide_Mobile_Slaughter.pdf

Connect to the webinar 15 minutes before the start: <http://connect.extension.iastate.edu/nichemeat>

For more info, contact Lauren Gwin (lauren.gwin@oregonstate.edu) or Arion Thiboumery (arion@iastate.edu)

Nominate a farmer for national award!

Do you know visionary farmers who not only raise amazing food but have also developed innovations in growing, marketing, and collaborating with their community in new and exciting ways? Are there inventive individuals, organizations or businesses in your community developing cutting-edge models to connect people with sustainable, regionally-produced food?

Please help recognize outstanding accomplishments from around the country by nominating someone whose work you admire for a Glynwood Harvest Award. The Harvest Awards honor individuals, organizations, and businesses across the United States demonstrating innovation and leadership in support of regional agriculture and sustainable food systems.

Nominations are due July 23, 2010. For more information [Glynwood Harvest Awards](#)

WASHINGTON STATE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

USDA Agricultural Research Service - New Kids Site



A great resource to share with your local schools and youth ag groups. ARS launches re-designed kids site, Sci4Kids.

Sci4Kids, an educational website operated by the [Agricultural Research Service](http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/kids) (ARS) at <http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/kids>, now has a new look and "feel."

The redesign builds on Sci4Kids' past success in educating kids about the importance of agriculture and science in their daily lives with easier site navigation, vibrant graphics, interactive content, videos and animation, among other improvements.

2010 Seattle Mariners Farmers Day

2010 Seattle Mariners Farmers Day

Take a break from the hard work and enjoy Mariners baseball at Safeco Field!

Sunday, August 29, 2010 at 1:10 p.m. the Mariners will host the Minnesota Twins. Log on to <http://www.mariners.com/farmers> for more details on a discounted ticket for all Washington farmers on this special day! Go Mariners!



Food Safety On the Farm - An educational resource



Check out this resource! In 2009, [Rural Roots](#), whose mission is to support and enhance sustainable and organic agriculture and local food networks in Idaho and the Inland Northwest, took learning out of the classroom and into the action with an on-farm food safety workshop series! By going to the [Rural Roots educational resource webpage](#) and selecting one of the several topics, you can view food safety educational resources, learn more about each farm, and see pictures demonstrating on-farm food safety practices.

Office of Farmland Preservation

360.407.7474
Fax: 360.407.6215

VISIT US ONLINE!

<http://ofp.scc.wa.gov>



Farmland Preservation Task Force

Farmer Representatives

Jacob Anderson, South Central
Sheryl Cox, South East
Jeff Emtman, North East
Bob Hart, Chair, North West
Greg Schoenbachler, South West
Richard Thomason, North Central

County Commissioners

Don Munks, Western Washington
Rudy Plager, Eastern Washington

WA Association of Conservation Districts

Fred Colvin

Legislators

Senator Mary Margaret Haugen
Senator Jim Honeyford
Representative Joel Kretz
Representative Larry Springer

Non-Voting Members

Roylene Rides at the Door, USDA NRCS
Dee Caputo, CTED

State Agencies/Offices

Lynn Bahrych, Chair, Conservation Commission
Lee Faulconer, WA State Dept. of Ag.
John Mankowski, Governors Executive Policy

"OUR MISSION IS TO PROMOTE THE VITALITY OF FARMING, FARMERS, AND RANCHERS BY ENSURING THAT WE WILL CONTINUE TO HAVE PRODUCTIVE AGRICULTURAL LANDS IN WASHINGTON STATE. WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS THROUGH POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATURE, THE OFFICE OF FARMLAND PRESERVATION AND OTHERS AND BY ENLISTING PUBLIC SUPPORT. PROGRAMS WILL BE VOLUNTARY, RECOGNIZE LOCAL PRIORITIES, AND PROVIDE FOR ECONOMIC INCENTIVES."